

Indiana Food Safety and Defense Task Force

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) supports and manages the Indiana Food Safety and Defense Task Force. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) grant funds have allowed the Task Force to expand the scope of work to focus on food safety and defense issues to further protect Indiana's vital food and agriculture infrastructure. The task force consists of several members from State/local government, industry, academia, health-care, and Federal (non-member) participants.

The Task Force serves many functions and goals such as:

- Provides a forum for open dialogue between industry, regulators, academia, law enforcement, healthcare, and other stakeholders in food safety and defense.
- Provides valuable technical expertise to work on special projects.
- Provides stakeholders input on proposed or future rules, regulations, and statutes.
- Allows stakeholders to provide insight when regulators are developing formal guidance policies.
- Promotes an educational environment for the stakeholders.
- Identifies and develops topics for future educational and training meetings.
- Promotes understanding of issues by all sides and fosters communication during and outside the meetings.
- Promotes the integration of an efficient statewide food safety and defense system that maximizes the protection of public health through the prevention, early detection, and containment of foodborne illness.
- Become a recognized consortium of key groups that can offer opinions to other groups such as IN General Assembly, IN Department of Homeland Security, IN Department of Agriculture, etc.
- Focuses on food defense, awareness, prevention, intervention, and response.
- Leverages new technology for sharing information and training by utilizing a Task Force Workgroup on the FoodSHIELD web-based system.

The Indiana Food Safety and Defense Task Force is currently structured to meet two times per year. Regular meetings are held during March and November of each year. Each meeting is set up with approximately six speakers to provide relevant food safety and defense information. A roundtable discussion between government, industry, health-care, and academia on current issues and concerns is offered. The Food Defense Program Coordinator manages the Indiana Food Safety and Defense Task Force grant. To join the Task Force, if you have any questions, concerns, or require more information please contact Sarah Popovich.

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